



# Briefing Book for Fresno General Plan Implementation / Infill Development Task Force

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Meeting 1: July 10, 2013

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## Introduction

The City of Fresno has undertaken an ambitious planning process to update its General Plan and Downtown Plans with policies designed to significantly increase infill development in the city's Downtown and urban core. City planners are currently developing the implementation strategies for the Fresno General Plan Update that will achieve these results.

However, Fresno faces severe fiscal circumstances that hinder the ability of the public sector to provide infrastructure (e.g. water, stormwater, sewerage, streets, and sidewalks) and services (e.g. public safety, parks, and facilities) that support and incentivize infill development. The loss of redevelopment agencies in California further augments these challenges. At the same time, there is substantial evidence and growing consensus in Fresno that policies which have supported expansion of the city's footprint are unsustainable due to their fiscal costs as well as their deleterious effects on the city's economic vitality, public health, natural resources, and quality of life.

In order to address these issues, the City of Fresno has partnered with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to convene a Task Force of experts in financing and implementing infill development. The General Plan Implementation/Infill Development Task Force (Task Force) is supported by technical assistance resources from EPA and the [White House Strong Cities, Strong Communities \(SC2\) initiative](#), which provides six pilot communities nationwide with access to federal resources that support economic growth and revitalization. EPA is leading the [SC2 initiative in Fresno](#) and has assisted the Mayor and OPR in organizing the Task Force.

The purpose of this briefing book is to help prepare the Task Force for its first meeting on July 10, 2013. It provides an overview of the key issues facing the City and describes some policies and strategies that the city has adopted or may want to consider in order to support infill development. However, many of the common solutions are not currently feasible in Fresno due to the city's fiscal condition. Therefore, the Task Force will be asked to identify creative solutions that can help Fresno and other similar cities.

## Goals and Objectives

### Fresno's Goals and Objectives

The City of Fresno is [updating its General Plan](#). As part of the planning process, the City has committed to a plan for future growth that significantly increases infill development in the Downtown area and urban core.<sup>1</sup> The adopted growth alternative for the Fresno General Plan Update calls for 45% of the city's new development through 2035 in infill development areas. Much of this new development is planned in and around Downtown, the neighborhoods immediately surrounding Downtown, and along the future bus rapid transit corridors running north and east from the Downtown area. The city has

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<sup>1</sup> In this context, "infill development" involves building and developing on vacant or underutilized land in the city center and other historic and previously-developed areas. This improves the urban core of a city and leaves rural and open spaces undeveloped. "Greenfield development" is development on land that has never been previously developed and there is no need to demolish or rebuild any existing structures.

adopted this policy in part because extensive research has shown that the cost of providing public services and extending infrastructure to support low density growth on the city's periphery is not fiscally sustainable. This approach will also improve transportation access and quality of life for many neighborhoods in the city that are struggling with high rates of poverty and unemployment, and will have positive effects on health outcomes and environmental impacts.

The success of the city's infill emphasis depends in large part on the willingness and ability of the private sector to invest in these locations. The City recognizes that greenfield development has been more attractive to private investors for several decades because it is less expensive and less complex. Therefore, one of the city's primary goals is to identify policies and strategies that will make infill development more attractive for developers and consumers of residential and commercial real estate.

Mayor Ashley Swearengen has strongly supported this goal since she took office in 2009. Her [second term agenda](#) calls for making Fresno "The Turnaround City" and highlights downtown revitalization as a key component. Among her specific objectives are revitalizing and restoring vehicular traffic to the Fulton Mall. The mayor also calls for attracting new private investment into downtown and developing a plan to fund infrastructure improvements such as new transit lines, water pipes, and sewer lines necessary to support the scale of infill development envisioned in the General Plan Update. Mayor Swearengen is also promoting economic development centered on food entrepreneurship and bioenergy. These industries can increase jobs in the region by tapping into and adding value to the region's agricultural produce.

## Task Force's Goals and Objectives

The Task Force brings together local, state, and national practitioners who are well known for their expertise and experience in **results-oriented, creative problem-solving** in complex, challenging development environments, and their knowledge of **innovative, non-traditional finance and development strategies**. It is this type of “out-of-the-box” thinking that the Task Force is designed to engender to help the City achieve its infill development goals, and to inform state and national efforts to increase infill development.

**In particular, the charge for the Task Force is to identify:**

- 1. Proper assessment of the challenges to infill development in Fresno: What contributes to the lack of investment and interest in infill areas?**
- 2. Priority areas for infill development incentives and public investment (and *how* to identify and prioritize them);**
- 3. The mechanisms that need to be in place to support infill projects, e.g.:**
  - **Tools, policies, and strategies for Fresno to provide infrastructure and service improvements;**
  - **Tools, policies, and strategies for Fresno to incentivize private development and public-private development partnerships;**
  - **Financing strategies to maintain and increase levels of service for public facilities and services, including options for generating public revenue for such services; and,**
- 4. Strategies to attract more developers and investors with experience in infill development models that succeed in other communities but have been relatively rare in Fresno.**

The Task Force's recommendations will not only be incorporated into the Implementation Element of the Fresno General Plan, but will also become the basis of a nationally-disseminated report that uses Fresno as a case study to illustrate infill development implementation options for economically-distressed cities throughout California and the United States, including policy recommendations at the state and federal levels.

## Summary of Task Force Member Introductory Calls

The consultant team conducted introductory phone calls of about an hour in length with each member of the Task Force prior to the first Task Force meeting. The purpose of these calls was to get a better sense of the backgrounds and expertise of the Task Force members.

### Themes

The Task Force members represent a variety of perspectives from both the public and private sectors. Members have deep knowledge and experience in areas such as law, finance, development, land use and transportation policy, business administration, and lending. Several members are deeply experienced in the Fresno market, while others have worked across the state of California. Some of the themes that emerged through interviews with the Task Force members include:

- Two key questions are important for understanding Downtown’s market potential:
  - What is downtown Fresno’s role in the region?
  - What is missing in the market place that Downtown can provide?
- Three items that are important to establish for the Task Force:
  - Clearly articulate the problem the city is trying to solve.
  - Clearly articulate the city’s goals.
  - Identify a small set of manageable tasks that will help accomplish the goals.
- Get creative with financing and look into combining different existing funding programs. Tap into the equity the city has in existing assets (for example, water and sewer systems).
- Investors are paying attention to city politics. Infill projects take longer to execute than greenfield projects; developers are looking for a city commitment and sustained political support for infill policies.
- Transit improvements and high speed rail will help create market demand for infill.
- Make sure city codes do not place unnecessary burdens on infill development.
- Relationships between cities and their adjacent counties are often tense in California. The city may be able to reduce cost burdens through better collaboration with the county.
- Housing authorities are well positioned to play a larger role in supporting infill development.
- Reduce regulatory obstacles and use financial incentives to attract businesses to downtown.

## Perspective on Infill Issues and Opportunities

The introductory conversations with Task Force members revealed several prominent themes about the issues and opportunities that Fresno and other communities face in supporting infill development and redevelopment.

### Issues

- Development costs more Downtown than in greenfield areas, but the bigger obstacle is lack of demand for residential or commercial space. The cost difference between infill development and greenfield development could be overcome if there were more market demand for real estate in the city’s core.

- It is easy to grow outward in the Fresno region. Land is plentiful and affordable.
- Fresno should focus its attention and resources on one Downtown catalyst location that can spur revitalization.
- The city has a large homeless population in the Downtown area, which is a challenge in trying to attract new development or residents.
- The CEQA process is often abused to stop or delay infill projects.
- Infill projects need assurance of future political support because they take longer to develop than greenfield projects. Historically, the city has not had consistent leadership and policies from one administration to the next.
- Residents within and outside the region have a perception that Fresno has a crime problem.
- The municipal finance toolbox is smaller with the elimination of redevelopment agencies.
- The outlying portions of Fresno that are within the Clovis Unified School District are more affluent and are growing faster than the portion within the Fresno Unified School District.
- Fresno does not have a very diverse economy with the type of private sector employers that would add a lot of jobs downtown.
- Downtown Fresno has struggled to define its role in the region.

### *Opportunities*

- “There is an energy about what we can do that’s never been here before.”
- The city’s elected officials are currently more united than they have been in recent memory.
- Fresno is growing rapidly.
- Fresno can build around assets such as Fulton Mall and the baseball stadium.
- High speed rail will make Fresno more accessible to the Bay Area and Los Angeles.
- The supply of downtown residential space is small. There may be latent demand for more.
- The city could partner with the private sector to manage public assets, which could save the city money that could be reinvested for infill projects.
- The region has an opportunity to encourage more value added food processing companies and jobs. Much of the region’s produce is shipped away for processing.
- The Fulton Mall is an asset that the suburbs cannot replicate.
- The Fresno Housing Authority has some projects in the pipeline and they are well managed.
- Fresno has several cultural attractions and there is potential to generate energy in the downtown area by clustering them.

## **The Fresno Context**

This section lays out some basic economic, fiscal, infrastructure, political, and planning context requested by Task Force members.

### **Economic**

Overall Fresno is an economically and fiscally stressed city in need of economic development and diversification. Fresno has fairly affluent neighborhoods in the north, particularly in the areas covered by



the Clovis Unified School District, but it also has some of the deepest pockets of poverty found in the United States. Many of these are clustered near Downtown. Fresno’s income and educational attainment levels lag behind the state of California while its poverty rate is nearly twice as high. Some basic demographics presented in the table below at various geographic scales.

Demographic Profile and Comparisons <sup>2</sup>				
Data	Downtown Neighborhoods	City of Fresno	Fresno County	State of California
<b>Population</b>	70,231	494,655	930,450	37,253,956
<b>Education and Economic</b>				
<b>Percent bachelors degree or higher</b>	< 5.0%	20.1%	19.5%	30.1%
<b>Median household income</b>	Not available.	\$43,440	\$46,903	\$61,632
<b>Families below poverty status</b>	43.0%	20.7%	18.4%	10.8%
<b>Race</b>				
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	69.4%	46.4%	49.8%	37.2%
<b>White alone</b>	Not available.	31.3%	33.3%	40.7%
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	Not available.	7.2%	4.8%	5.8%
<b>Asian alone</b>	Not available.	12.2%	9.3%	12.9%
<b>Housing</b>				
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	18,808	170,495	313,355	13,631,129
<b>Owner-occupied</b>	36.0%	49.3%	55.0%	56.7%
<b>Median value</b>	Not available.	\$223,900	\$236,400	\$421,600
<b>No vehicles available</b>	Not available.	11.3%	8.9%	7.7%

Fresno conducted a market analysis for the *Fulton Corridor Specific Plan*. Some highlights about the region’s, city’s, and downtown area’s economies are listed below:<sup>3</sup>

### *Jobs*

- The region added 120,000 jobs between 1990 and 2009; about half of the growth went to Fresno County. “Professional & Business Services” and “Education & Health” were by far the two fastest growing industries in the region. They both grew more than 70 percent. Meanwhile, “Agriculture” jobs only increased about 6 percent during this time period.
- Overall, “Government” is the top employment sector in Fresno County with about 68,500 jobs in 2009. “Retail, Leisure, and Hospitality” was second with 59,600; “Agriculture and Mining” was third with 47,400; and “Education and Health” was fourth with 40,200. No other category had more than 30,000 jobs as of 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Sources include the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 5-year estimates for 2011. The downtown area data are 3-year estimates from 2008. They come from the *Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan*.

<sup>3</sup> Strategic Economics. “Final Market Analysis Report, Fulton Corridor Specific Plan.” April 25, 2011.



- Downtown has about 30,000 jobs, but North Fresno is growing more rapidly as a job center and also has about 30,000 jobs. Overall, the city had about 190,000 jobs in 2006.

### *Housing*

- Single family detached units accounted for about 80 percent of the new housing between 2000 and 2009. Single family housing is expected to remain in high demand, but multi-family will increase its share of the overall housing development between 2010 and 2035.
- Housing in the downtown area has an average value of about \$58 per square foot, compared to about \$113 per square foot for the city as a whole. Values are too low to make any housing product feasible in the downtown area without a public subsidy.
- As of 2009, there were about 234 multi-family housing units newly completed or under construction in the downtown area and about 475 units in the planning pipeline. This development activity is concentrated in the Cultural Arts District. Most of the new units are renter-occupied. Most of the new residential development required public subsidies.

### *Office and Retail Space*

- Office vacancy rates in the downtown area are low by regional standards, but rents lag behind newer office markets in the northern part of the city. The vacancy rate in 2009 was 12 percent for downtown, about 16 percent for the region, but about 50 percent on the Fulton Mall. There are about 700,000 square feet of vacant inventory in historic office buildings downtown.
- It is estimated that Fresno County will add 60,000 new office jobs between 2010 and 2035.

### *Market Demand for New Downtown Development*

Estimated Market Demand for New Downtown Real Estate in 2035		
Land Use	Low Estimate	High Estimate
New Housing (units)	4,060	6,960
Office (gross s.f.)	2.5 million	3.9 million
Regional Retail & Entertainment (s.f.)	1.3 million	1.6 million
Total Residential & Commercial (s.f.)	8.7 million	13.9 million

### *Major County Employers<sup>4</sup>*

Major Fresno County Employers		
Employer	Industry	Employees
Fresno Unified School District	Education	11,500
County of Fresno	Government	6,194
Community Medical Regional Center	Healthcare	4,090
Clovis Unified School District	Education	3,370
City of Fresno	Government	3,100

<sup>4</sup> Economic Development Corporation Serving Fresno County. Labor Market.  
<http://www.fresnoedc.com/siteselection/labormarket.html>. Accessed June 28, 2013.

Major Fresno County Employers		
Employer	Industry	Employees
Saint Agnes Medical Center	Healthcare	2,745
California State University Fresno	Education	2,034
Kaiser Permanente Fresno	Healthcare	1,934
Wawona Frozen Foods	Food Processing	1,420
Pelco by Schneider Electric	Manufacturing	1,200

Much of the preceding information is citywide or regional in scope. Fresno also provided some key economic data for the Fulton Mall in the *Fulton Corridor Specific Plan*. The vacancy rate for the Mall's ground floor retail space is about 26%. The mayor's 2012 *State of Downtown* presentation stated that rents on the Fulton Mall are about ½ the regional average. The Mall lies at the heart of the city's downtown, and the *Specific Plan* makes it clear that it's the city's top priority for downtown revitalization. Cost estimates for reopening the mall to vehicular traffic and other improvements range from \$8 to \$16 million. The city has launched a property-base improvement district (PDID) in 2010 for improving the area.

## Fiscal

The city is operating under severe financial stress. Fresno's sales and property tax revenue remains below peak levels, state funding has been reduced, and some fees levied by the city have not kept up with the cost of providing the service. Meanwhile, costs continue to rise driven by health care, pension obligations, workers compensation, utilities, fuel, maintenance, and new state and federal regulations. Between 2009 and 2012, the city took several steps to address nearly \$100 million in budget shortfalls. Fresno has reduced its workforce by 22 percent, instituted furloughs, outsourced some city functions, and reduced maintenance and equipment replacement. The city has also raised some fees. However, general fund deficits are expected to continue growing each year without further action. As a result, all three credit agencies have downgraded the city's credit rating. However, unlike other California cities in a similar position, Fresno's long-term liabilities are not the problem. Rather, the city has poor cash flow over the next 10 years.<sup>5</sup>

Some key facts from the fiscal year 2013 budget are highlighted here:

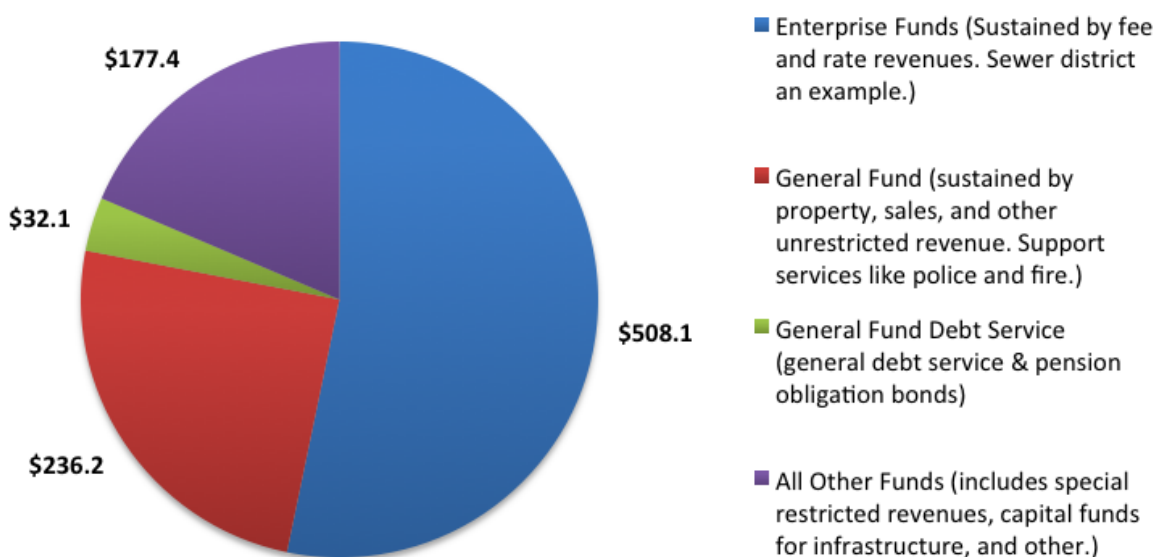
- Total budget (general fund, enterprise fund, other funds) = \$954 million.
  - Enterprise Funds = \$508.1 million.
  - General Fund = \$236.2 million.
  - General fund debt payments = \$32.1 million.
- Total city employees = 3,095 (About 1,000 have been eliminated in recent years).

Credit rating reports offer additional insights into the city's fiscal position. Fitch reported in 2012 that the city's general fund has minimal reserves. The city's revenues are weak due to a 12 percent decline in

<sup>5</sup> City of Fresno. "Fiscal Sustainability Policy." March 12, 2012. Accessed June 5, 2013 at <http://www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/Finance/Budget/default.htm>.

assessed property value from their 2009 peak. Meanwhile, debt service rose 38 percent between 2008 and 2013. As a result, the city cut operating expenditures 23 percent between 2009 and 2011. In order to improve its fiscal outlook, the city has renegotiated some labor contracts.<sup>6</sup>

### FY 2013 Budget Expenditures (millions)



### Infrastructure

Water and sewer infrastructure in the downtown area is adequate for the existing population, but will require improvement to support significant infill development. The *Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan* and *Fulton Corridor Specific Plan* described several issues and solutions for the area's infrastructure needs.

- About 30 percent of the utility networks in the downtown area are over 50 years old; roughly 5 percent are over 100 years old.
- The city has one of the highest rates of water use per capita in the state, while also having among the lowest rates for water.
- The downtown stormwater system is inadequate and heavy rains cause localized flooding.
- In order to address these issues, the Plan calls for encouraging several techniques including low impact development, recycling water, local renewable energy, and green building techniques.
- Water demand under the maximum build out of the *Specific Plan* would increase from 0.7 million gallons per day (MGD) to 3.3 MGD during the next 25 years. Sewer flows would increase from 1.6 MGD to 4.9 MGD.

<sup>6</sup> Press Release. "Fitch Downgrades Fresno, CA's Implied GO Rating to 'BBB+'; Outlook Negative. Fitch Ratings.

- The plan also identifies several water and wastewater projects that are needed to support development in the downtown area. The *Specific Plan* estimates their cost at more than \$30 million. Recycled water systems and improvements proposed in the Plan were estimated at about \$20 million. The specific improvements are described in Chapter 11 – Implementation.

Most of the water and sewer improvements will be taken on by City of Fresno. The city is the Regional Sewer Agency and provides service to the city as well as portions of Fresno County, the City of Clovis, and Pinedale.

## Transportation

The city also has ambitious plans to build a bus rapid transit system (BRT). The BRT system's Blackstone alignment would connect North Fresno with downtown and the Ventura/Kings Canyon alignment would connect downtown with neighborhoods to the east. The 15.7 mile system would include 27 stations and cost approximately \$47 million. The federal government is expected to pick up 80 percent of the cost and the state would pick up the remaining 20 percent. The city is also pursuing a streetcar project that would connect downtown with the Cultural Arts District via the Fulton Street corridor or Van Ness Avenue. The streetcar and BRT system would also help connect people to the future high speed rail station planned for the west side of downtown.

Additionally, Fresno will have the first High Speed Rail station in the planned California High Speed Rail system. The system will run about 500 miles from the San Francisco Bay area to Southern California via the San Joaquin Valley. The City is in the process of hiring a consultant to prepare the High Speed Rail Station Area Master Plan. In June of this year the California High Speed Rail Authority awarded a \$985 million contract to build the first segment of the system between Madera and Fresno.

## Political

Fresno has a "strong mayor" form of government. Voters elected Mayor Ashley Swearingin in 2009 and recently elected her to a second term. The mayor's responsibilities include hiring a city manager, producing a city budget, proposing legislation, and keeping the public informed about important issues. The city council consists of seven members elected from geographically defined districts. The mayor and council members serve four year terms. They are limited to two terms in office.

## Planning

Several recent planning efforts are particularly relevant to the mission of the Task Force. These are the General Plan Update, which is ongoing, and the Fulton Corridor Specific Plan and Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan, which were completed in 2011 as drafts.

### *Fresno General Plan and Development Code Update*

The City is updating its General Plan for the first time since 2002. The City is also updating its zoning code, which was developed based on the 1960 model code and revised incrementally over the years. While the project is not complete, the city has formally adopted a policy decision to focus on infill development to accommodate growth. Population is expected to reach 786,000 by 2035 and the city expects 125,000 new jobs. Fresno used a scenario planning process to determine that the preferred

approach to accommodating development would cluster it along high quality bus rapid transit corridors. This approach minimizes the need to develop greenfield land, makes better use of existing infrastructure assets, and saves the city money by reducing the need to extend infrastructure and services. The preferred scenario, compared to a business as usual scenario, would reduce land consumption by 31 percent, vehicle miles traveled by 15 percent, water consumption by 3 percent, and cumulative infrastructure costs through 2035 by 10 percent. The city will achieve these results through redevelopment and targeting new development on the city's 12,500 vacant residential lots. Several documents related to the General Plan Update can be downloaded here:

<http://www.fresno.gov/Government/DepartmentDirectory/DARM/AdvancedPlanning/Downloads.htm>.

### *Fulton Corridor Specific Plan & Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan*

These two related plans call for revitalizing the city's downtown area. They clearly identify revitalizing the Fulton Mall as a key to downtown revitalization. The Fulton corridor is city's historic "main street" and the most densely developed corridor in Fresno. However, the 1960's pedestrian mall concept has not lived up to its promise to attract business and activity to the downtown core. It only brings in about \$365,000 annually in property and sales tax revenue, but if it were developed to its full potential, it could bring in about \$6 million (2008 figures). The entire downtown area has an assessed value of about \$580 million and brings in about \$2.5 million annually in property and sales taxes (2009 figures). The Plan acknowledges that realizing the area's potential will require significant infrastructure investments. It calls for tens of millions of dollars in streetscape improvements, road diets, one-way to two-way conversions, opening up the Fulton Mall to vehicular traffic, introducing bus rapid transit, and building a high speed rail station. The Plan also calls for several water and sewer improvements described above. The Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan encompasses a larger area that includes downtown Fresno and its surrounding neighborhoods (about 7,900 acres).

## **Existing Tools and Resources Available to Fresno**

This section lists several tools that Fresno may be able to use in support of infill development. The tools are organized by five categories. Beneath each category are descriptions of the tool and some resources or examples from California and across the country.

### **Financial Incentives for Infill Development**

#### *Tools*

- Property tax exemption or abatement for new housing development.
- Reduction of development impact fees in specific areas to encourage infill development.
- Use of tax increment financing districts to provide financial support for infill and redevelopment (would require legislative reauthorization).
- Government property lease tax, which describes the leasing of publicly owned land for development at rates below what property taxes would be. (would require state legislation).
- Land value tax (to reduce incentive for holding vacant/underutilized land)

- Tax shifts or swaps (such as increasing income tax in exchange for a decrease in property tax, etc.). (would require state legislation.)
- HUD Section 108 loan program, which allows the use of CDBG funds for federally guaranteed loans for neighborhood revitalization projects.
- HUD Section 223(f) loan program, which allows federal loan insurance to facilitate lending for purchase and refinancing of existing multifamily projects. Fresno is lobbying HUD to remove three-year building age minimum for eligibility for infill locations.
- HUD Section 203(k) loan program, which supports financing through local lenders for purchase and rehabilitation of single family properties.

## *Resources*

- **City of Portland, OR:** Tax abatement programs for new multi-family housing in the central city or urban renewal areas, transit oriented development (TOD) housing in transit zones, and new single-family housing in designated opportunity areas. [link](#)
- **City of Tacoma, WA:** Tax exemption program for new multi-family housing in mixed-use centers. [link](#)
- **City of Lancaster, CA:** Distance-based impact fee policy. [link](#)
- **City of Sacramento, CA:** Impact fee reductions to encourage infill development. [link](#)
- **City of Albuquerque, NM:** Impact fees which vary according to the needs of designated service areas. [link](#)
- **State of Arizona:** Government property lease tax. [link](#)
- **Lincoln Institute of Land Policy:** Report on land value taxation. [link](#)
- **HUD Section 108:** Loan Guarantee Program. [link](#)
- **HUD Section 223(f):** Loan insurance program. [link](#)
- **HUD Section 203(k):** Home rehabilitation loan program. [link](#)

## **Regulatory and Policy Incentives**

### *Tools*

- Prioritize capital spending in targeted infill areas where infrastructure needs are a barrier to sustainable development.
- Develop criteria and scoring to identify projects that may receive expedited development review and financial incentives.
- Relaxed parking standards and optimized construction standards for infill development.
- Modified code requirements related to setbacks, lot sizes and widths, and building height to accommodate higher density and intensity in targeted areas.
- “Complete streets” policies to encourage walking, biking, and transit use.
- Pre-approve infill housing plans and infill demonstration projects.
- Create zoning and design guidelines for small-lot single family homes.
- Modify development codes to facilitate infill development.
- Streamline CEQA process for infill projects.

- Develop comprehensive infill policies and strategies for targeted areas or tiered zones.

## *Resources*

- **Clark County, WA:** Focused public investment areas report. [link](#)
- **City of Austin, TX:** Smart Growth Criteria Matrix. [link](#)
- **King County, WA:** Right Size Parking Calculator. [link](#)
- **San Luis Obispo County, CA:** Infill standards background report [link](#)
- **Smart Growth America:** Introduction to complete streets and best policies report. [link](#) and [link](#)
- **City of Sacramento, CA:** City Sponsored Infill House Plan Program. [link](#)
- **Federation of Canadian Municipalities:** Infill housing demonstration project in Victoria, BC. [link](#)
- **City of Los Angeles, CA:** Small lot ordinance. [link](#)
- **Puget Sound Regional Council, WA:** Small-lot housing guidelines. [link](#)
- **State of Maryland:** Model and Guidelines for Infill Development. [link](#)
- **Holland & Knight:** Study of CEQA court decisions, focusing on the types of projects most often litigated. [link](#) and [link](#)
- **City of Sacramento, CA:** Infill strategy. [link](#)
- **City of San Antonio, TX:** Inner city reinvestment/infill policy. [link](#) and [link](#)
- **City of Billings, MT:** Infill policy. [link](#)

## **Procedural Improvements and Strategies**

### *Tools*

- Fast track plan review and permitting for infill projects.
- Create an infill development team with the city to work on infill projects.
- Conduct corridor-level transit-oriented development (TOD) planning.

### *Resources*

- **City of Fresno:** Articles X to XIII in Infill Development Act report. [link](#)
- **Center for TOD:** Transit corridors and TOD report. [link](#)

## **Land Assembly**

### *Tools*

- Identify, inventory, and market parcels for potential infill development and redevelopment.
- Facilitate information exchange on disposition of publicly owned parcels.
- City acquires land and uses land banking.

### *Resources*

- **Center for Community Progress:** Land banking report. [link](#)



- **Lincoln Institute for Land Policy:** Report on land information systems and community development. [link](#)

## Financing

### *Tools*

- Establish a Mello-Roos (community facilities) district, which is a special tax district that can be used to finance improvements and services within an area if 2/3 of voters in the district approve.
- Establish an infrastructure financing district (like a tax increment finance district, but requires property owner and taxing district approval; can capture school district taxes).
- Establish a business improvement district.
- Low-cost financing through California's Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (I-Bank).

### *Resources*

- **City of Fullerton, CA:** Specific plan funding and financing strategy. [link](#)
- **Urban Land Institute:** Suburban infrastructure for compact development report. [link](#)
- **U.S. EPA:** Transit oriented development financing options report. [link](#)
- **California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank:** Programs fact sheet. [link](#)
- **California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank:** Infrastructure state revolving fund information. This program finances public infrastructure projects with fixed interest rates of less than 3 percent for up to 30 years. [link](#)
- **U.S. Treasury's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI):** A program that guarantees bonds issued to support community and economic development. [link](#)

## Additional Tools and Strategies for Economically Constrained Cities

- **Neighborhood Return on Investment (NROI)** is an overarching strategy for city government to direct resources where they achieve the highest returns in property values, with a focus on improving neighborhood quality of life (and thus property values). [link](#)
- **Strong Towns** is a city planning and growth management approach that emphasizes NROI and incremental improvements to create economic value that is resilient over time and avoids large upfront capital spending that can create unsustainable long term public financial obligations.
  - Overview of the approach: [link](#)
  - The Strong Towns organization has worked with the City of Memphis as part of the Mayor's Innovation Delivery Team (see below).
    - Excerpt from the Memphis report: [link](#)
    - Infographic that summarizes the report and strategies: [link](#)
    - Example of Tactical Urbanism (see below) in Memphis: [link](#)

- The City of Memphis **Mayor’s Innovation Delivery Team** is an initiative sponsored by a Bloomberg Philanthropies grant to help develop solutions to city problems. One of the issues Memphis is focusing on is neighborhood economic vitality. [link](#)
  - See the 25 Square initiative on the website as an example of a cross-department program to reclaim and revitalize strategically selected 25-block areas of the city.
  - Strong Cities, Strong Communities is working in Memphis as well.
- **Tactical Urbanism** describes a variety of low cost, sometimes unofficial actions aimed at improving livability at a local scale and enhancing neighborhood quality of life. These small scale projects are meant to be low-risk but potentially high-reward. [link](#)
- **Economic Gardening** describes an economic development approach that focuses on growing existing businesses within a community rather than “hunting” or attracting businesses from the outside. It is entrepreneur-centered and provides a range of assistance to second-stage small growth companies. [link](#)

## Web Links to Additional Resources

- **Fresno 2035 General Plan Update:** Document downloads page. [link](#)
- **Fresno Infill Committee:** Maps and downloads page. [link](#)
- **Downtown Fresno Fulton Corridor Specific Plan:** Documents and resources page. [link](#)
- **Fresno Downtown Neighborhoods Community Plan:** Documents and resources page. [link](#)
- **Market Demand Analyses for Higher Density Housing in the San Joaquin Valley:** [link](#)
- **A Home for Everyone: San Joaquin Valley Housing Preferences and Opportunities to 2050:** Long term demand projections by Professor Chris Nelson. [link](#)

**Appendix A: Swearengin Administration, Second Term Agenda, “Fresno – The Turnaround City”**



**Swearingin Administration**  
Second Term Agenda  
January 2013 through December 2016

# FRESNO—The Turnaround City

I am honored to continue to lead our city and am extremely enthusiastic about the direction of Fresno. Everywhere you look, you see evidence of our city making a great turnaround.

Much like the last four years, my team and I will spend every moment of the next four years working to improve Fresno's economy. My second term agenda lays out our priorities for economic development in Fresno.

January 10, 2013

## **JOBS**

### **Business Conditions and Incentives**

- **Fresno Food Expo** — expand the Fresno Food Expo every year by 10% and help secure new contracts for Fresno food manufacturers
- **Enhanced Economic Development Rate** — work to pass the Enhanced Economic Development Rate by the California Public Utilities Commission, thereby dropping power costs by 35% for qualifying businesses who expand, locate, and stay in Fresno
- **Incentives for Water and Wastewater Infrastructure** — promote the City's flexible water and wastewater infrastructure services to secure business expansions and locations
- **Mayor's Export Commission** — formally launch an Export Commission with support from U.S. Department of Commerce to help Fresno businesses increase their export sales

- **Central Valley Business Incubator Food Entrepreneurs Initiative** — help local food businesses launch and grow in Fresno
- **Commercial Kitchen Incubator** — plan for and launch a commercial kitchen incubator in Downtown Fresno to support start-up food businesses
- **Bioenergy Initiative** — work with the California Farm Bureau, private enterprise, utilities, the California Energy Commission and California Public Utilities Commission on launching a sustainable bioenergy industry in the San Joaquin Valley

### **People**

- **Learn2Earn** — ensure an additional 5,000 adults access adult education over the next four years

## Infrastructure

- **Food Processing Industrial Park District** — complete assessment of industrial park district for food processing industry
- **Five year capital plan that supports industrial expansion** — ensure the City's next 5-year capital plan accommodates food processing industry expansion, as well as secures long-term water supply for the city

## Promotion of Fresno

- **Food Industry** — Aggressive marketing and promotion of Fresno's successes in the food industry yielding 10 expansions/location a year
- **Public Market** — launch Public Market in Downtown Fresno
- **Farmers Market Directory**

## Revitalize Downtown Fresno

**To protect our ag land; attract and retain the talent needed to expand our economy; and resolve City's long-term budget issues**

- **Fulton Mall** — complete environmental work on Mall options; choose a future for the Mall; securing funding; complete the project
- **Investors** — recruit an additional \$50 million of private investment in Downtown Fresno
- **HSR Station** — complete the HSR station area plan
- **Parking** — implement a parking program that supports a revitalized Downtown Fresno
- **Infill Infrastructure Financing Task Force** — develop smart, actionable plan to fund infrastructure needed for infill development
- **Broadband Initiative** — recruit ultra-high speed wireless service to Downtown Fresno

## Neighborhoods and Housing

- **Building Neighborhood Capacity Program** — expand efforts from Lowell Neighborhood into Southwest Fresno, El Dorado Park
- **Homelessness**
  - update 10 year plan to address homelessness
  - raise a total of \$2 m for Fresno First Steps Home
- **2035 General Plan** — adopt and implement a General Plan that supports neighborhood revitalization

## Beautification and Green Space

- **Master Urban Parkway Trail System** — determine phasing for completion of Master Urban Parkway Trail System
- **Median Island and Landscaping Initiative** — develop private initiative involving corporate sponsorships and volunteers to enhance median island landscaping and maintenance
- **Freeway and Highway Clean Up** — ensure long-term, viable program to maintain highways and freeways

## Remembering Our Veterans

- **Restore the Veterans Memorial Auditorium**

## Supporting the Arts

- **Any Given Child** — develop and implement Any Given Child arts initiative; launch monthly promotion of local art galleries in partnership with Fresno Arts Council and Art Hop

## City of Fresno Fiscal Sustainability

- **Ensure sustainable level of operations**
- **Pay off remaining negative fund balances**
- **Start building back reserves in FY 17 budget**

## Fresno Citizens for a Strong Economy Campaign

- **"I Believe" campaign** — reach 1,000 people through a minimum of 100 "house meetings" throughout Fresno in the next 12 months to talk about the future of Fresno and the future of our Downtown



## Swearengin Administration

Second Term Agenda

January 2013 through December 2016

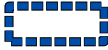




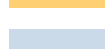
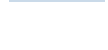
## **Appendix B: Maps and Graphics**




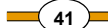



# FRESNO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

## Planning Boundaries

### Boundaries

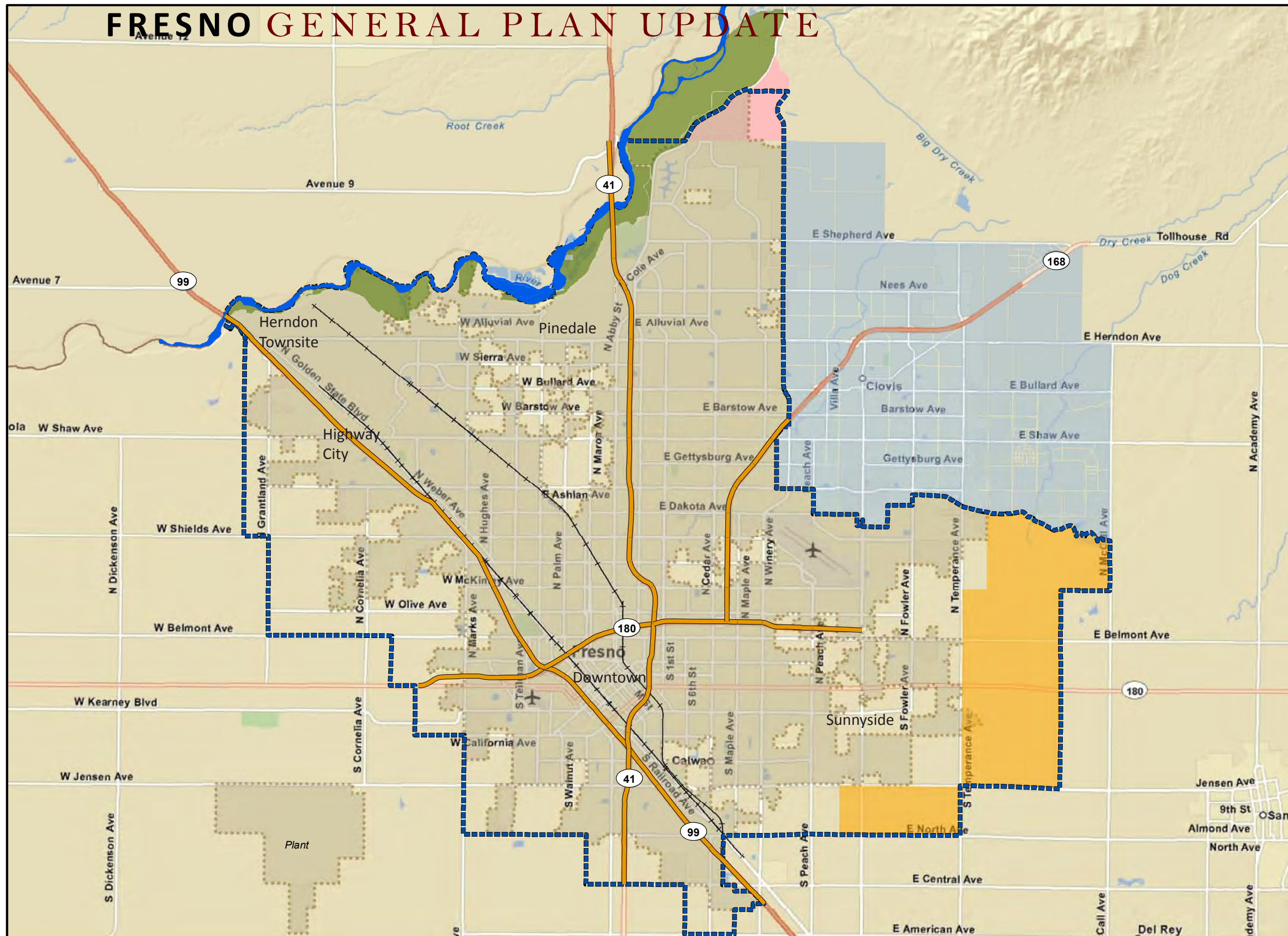
-  Sphere Of Influence
-  City Limits
-  North Growth Area
-  Multi-Use
-  San Joaquin River
-  SEGA
-  Clovis GP

### Circulation

-  State Highway 99
-  State Highway 41
-  State Highway 168
-  State Highway 180
-  Rail Lines

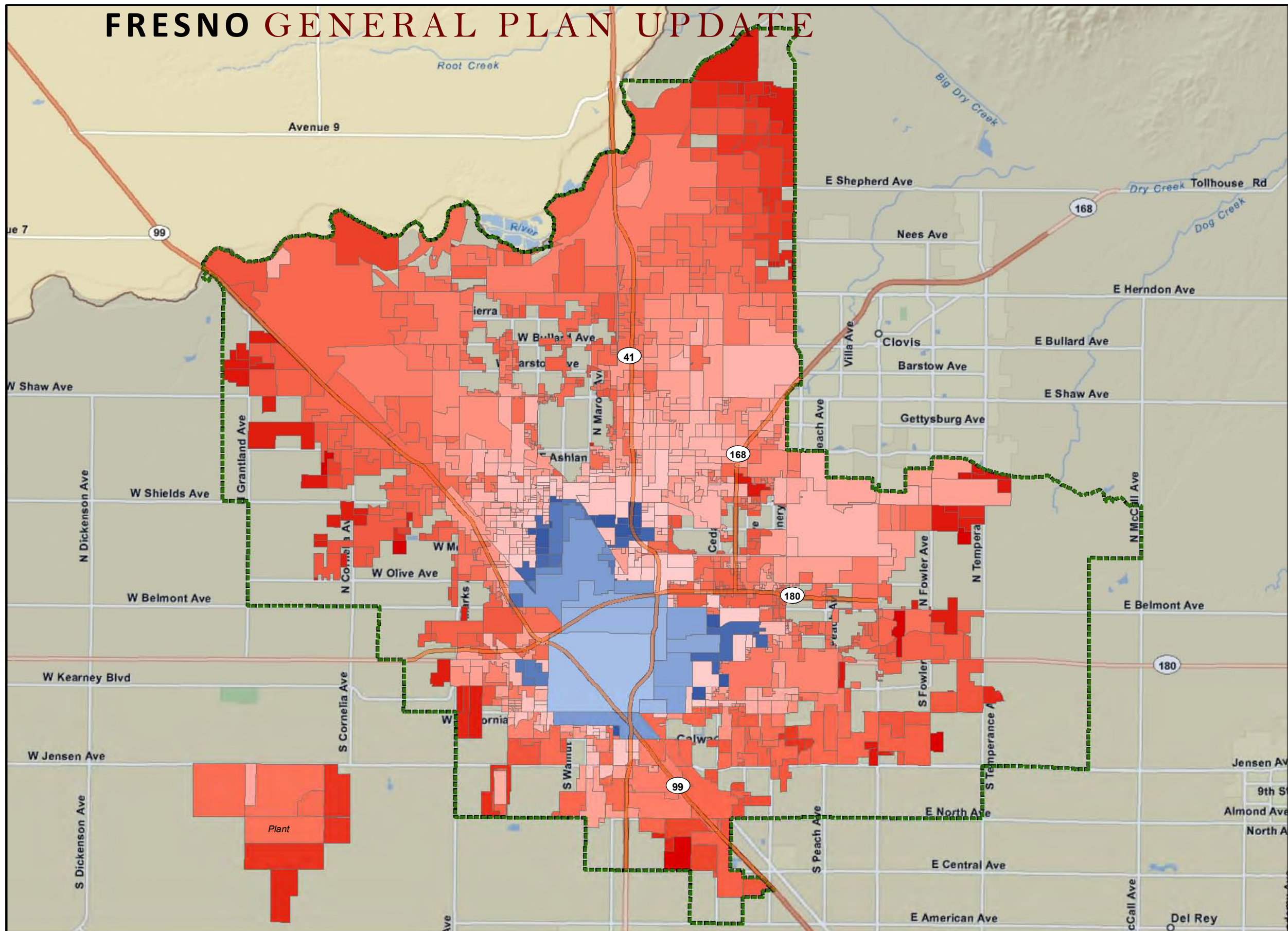
0 0.4 0.8 1.6 2.4 Miles

Source: Boundary and circulation information, City of Fresno Development And Resource Management Department, 2010; World Street Map, developed by Esri using DeLorme basemap layers, Automotive Navigation Data, USGS, UNEP-WCMC, Tele Atlas Dynamap, 2009





# FRESNO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE



## Local Setting

### Boundaries

- Sphere Of Influence
- Fresno City Limits
- Fresno County

### Historic Growth Patterns

- Post 1945 Growth
- Pre 1946 Growth

### Circulation

- State Highway 99
- State Highway 41
- State Highway 168
- State Highway 180

0 0.45 0.9 1.8 2.7 Miles

Source: Boundary and circulation information, City of Fresno Development And Resource Management Department, 2010; World Street Map, developed by Esri using DeLorme basemap layers, Automotive Navigation Data, USGS, UNEP-WCMC, Tele Atlas Dynamap, 2009, City Boundaries, CA Department of Transportation, 2008

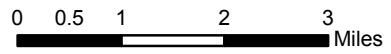


# FRESNO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

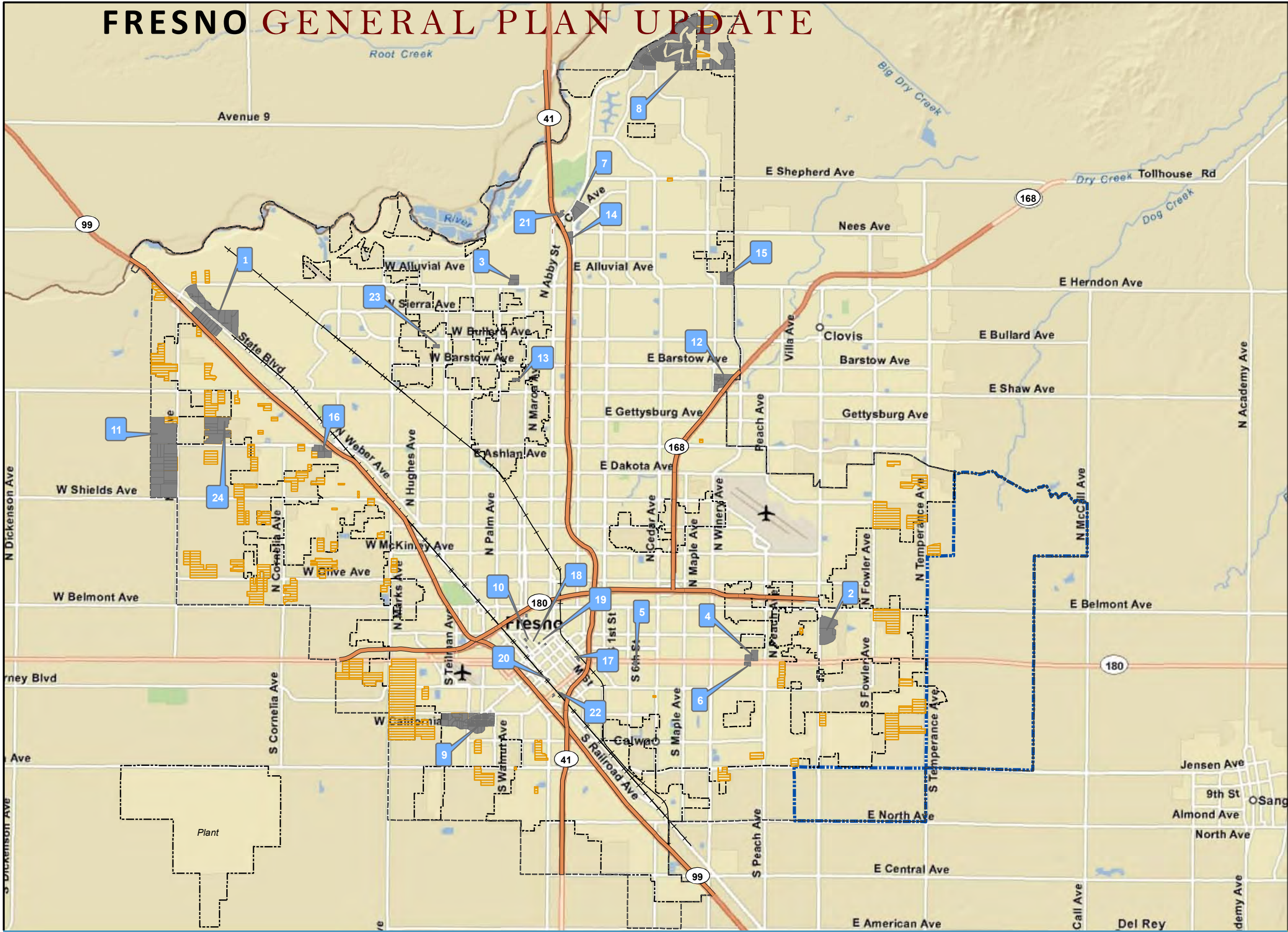
## Current Development

- Project Parcels
- Approved Tentative Maps

- Projects
- 1 - El Paseo
  - 2 - Fancher Creek
  - 3 - Wal-Mart Expansion (Shaw)
  - 4 - Wal-Mart Expansion (KC)
  - 5 - Tulare & 7th (RDA Mixed Use)
  - 6 - Transit Village (Mixed Use)
  - 7 - Fresno 40
  - 8 - Copper River
  - 9 - Hope VI - Villages at California
  - 10 - GV Urban Projects
    - Fulton Village
    - Fulton & Voorman
    - Tuolumne & M
    - Van Ness & Mildreda
  - 11 - Westlake
  - 12 - Campus Pointe
  - 13 - Villas at Figarden
  - 14 - Zinkin Mixed Use (73K SF)
  - 15 - Herndon Meadows (Palmquist)
  - 16 - Ashlan & Blythe (Wathen)
  - 17 - Warehouse Row (Mixed Use)
  - 18 - Broadway Lofts (Reza Assemi)
  - 19 - Bastian Court (Mixed Use)
  - 20 - Renaissance @ SC (71 SRO)
  - 21 - Zinkin 10 Story Office
  - 22 - 3M Gallon Water Tank
  - 23 - Forkner Senior Housing
  - 24 - Artisan Square





Source: Boundary and circulation information, current development list, City of Fresno Development And Resource Management Department, 2010











# FRESNO GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

## Socioeconomic Characteristics

-  Sphere Of Influence
-  City Limits






### Block Groups

#### 2010 Median Household Income

-  \$84,001 to \$375,000
-  \$70,001 to \$84,000
-  \$41,001 to \$70,000 (Mean: \$55,265)
-  \$27,001 to \$41,000
-  \$0 to \$27,000
-  Zero Population




### Counties

#### 2010 Median Household Income

-  \$84,001 to \$116,778
-  \$70,001 to \$84,000
-  \$41,001 to \$70,000 (Mean: \$43,745)
-  \$27,001 to \$41,000
-  \$8,889 to \$27,000

### States

#### 2010 Median Household Income

-  \$70,001 to \$72,519
-  \$41,000 to \$70,000 (Mean: \$53,279)
-  \$36,104 to \$41,000

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

Source: The 2010 Median Household Income is an estimate of income for the calendar year 2009. Income amounts are expressed in current dollars, including an adjustment for inflation or cost-of-living increases. The median is the value that divides the distribution of household income into two equal parts. These data are ESRI's 2010 estimates. Copyright:© 2010 ESRI

